

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE:

Amend the following claim:

1. (Thrice amended) In a non-detachable press fit arrangement between an end portion of a metal pipe and a socket of a fitting, with the socket defining an interior space and being formed with an annular anchoring groove facing the interior space for receiving a sealing ring, said press fit arrangement comprising at least one holding element resiliently secured to the socket in a receiving groove and cold formed together with the socket, said holding element has a material penetrating component formed by a plurality of cutting arcuate projections pointing in the direction of the end portion of the metal pipe for penetrating the metal pipe, and wherein the annular anchoring groove is located in front of and separate from the receiving groove relative to the pipe end.

REMARKS

The last Office Action of December 19, 2001 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration of the instant application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 6-9, 11, 18-21 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 2, 6-9, 11, 18-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,108,134 (hereinafter "Irwin ") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,484, 174 (hereinafter "Gotoh ").

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1, 2, 6-9, 11, 18-21 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER IRWIN IN VIEW OF GOTOH

The Examiner's continued rejections on substantive issues should be avoided in that the application should not be subjected to this type of piecemeal examination. The claims are rejected as unpatentable over Irwin in view of Gotoh. It is believed that claims 1, 2, 6-9, 11, 18-21 as now on file are clearly distinguishable over these two references for reason which will be set forth hereinafter.

Neither Irwin nor Gotoh teach the present invention. Irwin as understood does not disclose a press fit. It discloses an "olive" which is attached either to the pipe or the socket portion as pointed out by the Examiner. In whatever manner it is used, Irwin does not disclose that the "holding element has a material

penetrating component formed by a plurality of cutting arcuate projections pointing in the direction of the end portion of the metal pipe for penetrating the metal pipe.” In Irwin, the projections at the olive as disclosed the Examiner likened to the “arcuate projections” in the claimed invention. However, Irwin does not teach the position of the projections as claimed here. Applicant’s invention as set forth in the claims is configured with the projections facing the end portion of the metal pipe. This clearly distinguishes over the cited Art.

Furthermore, neither Irwin nor Gotoh show the sealing ring being seated in relation to the holding element as claimed here. While the Examiner states that the sealing ring 42 can be positioned “in front of or trailing the holding element” this is not disclosed in the cited lines. Col. 4, lines 30 – 33 states that the sealing ring can be provided to seat between the portions 16 and 18 when fitted together. There is not disclosure as to any axial orientation which relates “to in front of” or “trailing” the holding element. The orientation as disclosed relates to a radial relationship only.

Applicant’s invention relates to a press-fit where the seats for the sealing ring and the seat for the projections of the holding element are separate and spaced apart. Seating the sealing groove in front of the securing groove has the advantage of protecting the holding element from the fluid streaming through the pipe, which comes into play when corrosive fluids are at work. This arrangement avoids costly material that would otherwise be necessary to be used for the holding element.

For the reasons as set forth it is applicant's contention that neither Irwin nor Gotoh or a combination thereof teaches or suggest the invention as claimed in claim 1.

As for the rejection of the retained dependent claims, these claims depend on claim 1, share its presumably allowable features, and therefore it is respectfully submitted that these claims should also be allowed.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 6-9, 11, 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and allowance thereof are thus respectfully requested.

CITED REFERENCES

Applicant has also carefully scrutinized the further cited prior art and finds it without any relevance to the newly submitted claims. It is thus felt that no specific discussion thereof is necessary.

CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that when the Examiner reconsiders the claims in the light of the above comments, he will agree that the invention is in no way properly met or anticipated or even suggested by any of the references however they are considered.

None of the references discloses a press-fit arrangement, wherein the holding element is secured in a receiving groove spaced apart from the

anchoring groove of the sealing ring and wherein the material penetrating portion faces in the direction of the end portion of the pipe.

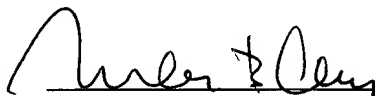
In view of the above presented remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that all claims on file should be considered patentably differentiated over the art and should be allowed.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawing, then it is respectfully requested that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the case to issuance. If the Examiner feels that it might be helpful in advancing this case by calling the undersigned, applicant would greatly appreciate such a telephone interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge fees, which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-0502.

Respectfully submitted,

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